

**STATE SENATOR • JIM BARCIA • 31ST DISTRICT**

# **Barcia Press Release**

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## **BARCIA CALLS ON STATE TO EXTEND HELP TO OWNERS OF LAKEFRONT PROPERTY**

(LANSING)—State Senator Jim Barcia (D-Bay City) introduced legislation today that will ease beachfront maintenance regulations for Michigan's waterfront property owners.

“For decades, Michigan property owners were allowed to groom and maintain their beachfront property. Unfortunately, the Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) are attempting to restrict this practice,” said Barcia. “Not only does it hinder tourism and increase health risks in our state, but we are also seeing an erosion of the tax base to our shoreline property.”

Senator Barcia's bill will allow property owners to manually or mechanically level and groom the top four inches of sand between the ordinary high water mark and the water's edge. With water levels falling off in recent years, beachfront property owners are often confronted with high vegetation growth and pools of standing water. Both of these situations can prove hazardous to the health and safety of Michigan's citizens and wildlife.

Lakefront property owners have formally organized a grassroots effort to respond to the current beachfront maintenance regulations. The group, known as Save Our Shoreline (SOS), is advocating for responsible management of their lakefront property. Simultaneously, the Shoreline Task Force, with representation from the DEQ, Army Corps of Engineers and SOS, will present its recommendations on the creation of general and regional permits which would allow for beachfront maintenance activities. The Task Force recommendations may also provide the framework for future legislation in addressing this important issue.

“I believe the state of Michigan must intervene to bring a mutually acceptable resolution to this matter. We cannot afford to risk our health and safety,” said Barcia. “The members of SOS, and other lakefront property owners throughout the state, are committed to protecting one of our state’s most precious resources. My bill will give them the necessary tools to do so.”

Senator Barcia teamed with Representative Brian Palmer (R-Romeo) who recently introduced similar legislation in the House of Representatives. They are hopeful of receiving the full support of the state legislature.

State Senator Jim Barcia represents the 31<sup>st</sup> Senate District, which includes Arenac, Bay, Huron, Sanilac, and Tuscola counties. He is a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, where he serves as Vice-Chair of the subcommittees on Agriculture, Environmental Quality, Natural Resources, and Transportation.

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